

## 2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

### LIBRARY NAME

Salt Spring Island Public Library

### 1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

**Provide a brief description of the community and library, focusing on what has changed in the past year (up to 500 words).**

Salt Spring Island is a unique 70-square-mile island with a population of 11,635, an increase of 10.2% since 2016 (10,557). It has a vibrant natural provincially protected environment, and a diverse history, from millennia-old First Nations communities, to Hawaiian, Japanese, and Black settlers in the 19th century and draft dodgers in the 20th. The Salt Spring community now comprises a population that includes 30% seniors, as well as many families, remote workers, artists, musicians, and seasonal visitors.

Throughout year two of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Library operated safely within the BC government protocols as an "essential service" for our community. We have been exceptionally active during this time. The community's trust and support, and the dedication of volunteers and staff, was expressed by 105,474 patron visits, an increase of 26%, and 61,741 virtual visits. The Library added 649 new members, and patrons checked out 137,884 physical materials (a 60% increase) and 40,199 digital items. Whether online or in person, patrons of all ages used the Library to read, learn, see local arts, research, connect, use the internet, and study. The Library presented 156 in-person and online programs for 2,177 adults, and 151 programs for 1,894 teens and children. Programs included book launches, Tech Cafés, tech tutoring, monthly art exhibits, Reconciliation Reading Circles, weekend StoryWalks, and summer and spring break camps. Ninety-six committed volunteers, including our dynamic group of teen volunteers, contributed 9,904 hours to the Library's core operations, even as the community contended with lockdowns and changing restrictions. Support for the Library's programs and services was shown by \$43,668 in Annual Appeal donations from the local community. The Library also received a generous local bequest for \$102,700, which will be used for new strategic priorities as a result of the Library Board and staff undertaking community consultation which led to the creation of a new "Salt Spring Island Public Library Strategic Plan: 2022-2027."

In 2021, Quw'utsun Artist Charlene Johnny created a tremendous Indigenous Mural featuring the rich ocean heritage of our island, while mentoring ten young Indigenous artists, with the support of community partners and funders, including The Berman Foundation, who also granted a \$2,500 Adult BIPOC collection, and the SSI Foundation, also granting \$4,000 for COVID Recovery.

### 2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please describe any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year.

Project/Program Name
Indigenous Mural Project
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>

The Salt Spring Island Public Library completed an Indigenous Mural of Salish Sea ocean life, based on Traditional Knowledge, on the outside of the Library building in August, 2021. The Library and its community partners showed their commitment to the principles of Truth & Reconciliation and local arts projects by working together to create a mural by Indigenous youth representatives of First Nations in the Southern Gulf Islands region, and beyond.

The mural was designed and produced by Quw'utsun Artist Charlene Johnny, who mentored ten young Indigenous artists to create the mural from August 16 – 26 on the outside of the Library building. The objective of the mural by Indigenous youth is to raise awareness of local Indigenous communities on Salt Spring, to mentor Indigenous artists, and to be a symbol of the Library and community's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. The project includes artistic contributions from Quw'utsun, W̱SÁNEĆ First Nations, and Penelakut peoples. With blessings from local First Nations, we hope that the design may inspire future murals on Salt Spring, kickstarting a local movement to increase public art in the village, with inclusion of Indigenous representation.

The Salt Spring Island Public Library hopes that the mural project demonstrates a visible commitment to Reconciliation, at a time of great need for these dialogues, and creates an artistic presence of Indigenous culture in Ganges, making Salt Spring's Indigenous presence more accessible and present to all.

**How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?**

The Indigenous Mural Project strengthened partnerships with Indigenous groups, was a dynamic program in response to the Calls to Action, and increased visual inclusion through artwork which supported the library's strategic priority, *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Commit to principles and activities that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, truth and reconciliation*.

The Indigenous Mural Project also supported the community by providing honorariums and art training to local and regional Indigenous youth. The creation of the mural also brought the community together to witness and interact with Indigenous youth, and the Library's partners and funders were invited to a Mural Celebration with relatives, and elders to celebrate and give thanks.

**How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.**

1. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	
2. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	



<p>3. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>The Indigenous Mural Project advanced engagement and strengthened partnerships with Indigenous youth and groups, was a dynamic program in response to the Calls to Action, and increased visual inclusion through Indigenous artwork.</p>
<p>4. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	
<p><b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b></p>	
<p>The major outcome of the Indigenous Mural Project was the personal relationships built within our community, which included the relationships built between local and off island indigenous artists, increased relationships between the Library and Indigenous communities, and between artist hosts and indigenous artists and their families.</p> <p>Another outcome was learning that successfully working with Indigenous communities may mean being willing to change the way you would usually manage a project. We also learned that it takes a community to be successful in a large, multigenerational project of this type, as we needed members of our Reconciliation Reading Circle to billet Indigenous youth painting the mural.</p> <p>A further outcome is that Charlene Johnny and Library Director, Karen Hudson, will present the Indigenous Mural Project to the BC Library Association as a conference presentation for the 2022 BC Library Conference.</p> <p>Finally, an outcome that's hard to measure is the Community Awareness that's been generated by the Indigenous Mural project, including the multiple news stories where it was featured, social media on the Library and partner's social media, and photos being used by funders on their websites and annual reports.</p>	
<p><b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?</b></p>	
<p>This project was a great success and could not have happened without the support from its community partners: Stqeeye' Learning Society (Xwaaqw'um Project); Salt Spring Arts Council; Gulf Islands School District #64 Indigenous Education Department; Adam Olsen, MLA, as well as the C.R.D, owner of the Library building, and funding partners: The Salt Spring Island Foundation, the Philip and Muriel Berman Foundation Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation, and Islandlink Library Federation.</p>	

<b>Project/Program Name</b>
Teen Volunteer Program
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>
<p>A new Teen Program Coordinator, a former Teen Services Librarian of ten years with a background in mental health and family support service work, was hired in August 2021. The coordinator's initial goal in this role was the revival of the formerly robust (pre-Covid) teen volunteer program, through recruitment of new participants from local schools, via parenting groups, and in connection with local youth organizations. Local teens have recently returned to in-house volunteering every week, shelving, weeding, and completing hands-on projects supporting the library, additionally several teens have taken on new virtual volunteering roles, coordinating their own webinars and podcasts, with oversight by the program coordinator.</p> <p>The program supports local youth in cultivating a sense of ownership and pride in their role in the function and impact of their local public library and supports them in creating opportunities for other youth to become similarly engaged with the library, with one another, and with the larger community. Each program participant is encouraged to pitch their potential projects/events to the program coordinator, and a plan is developed to bring these ideas to fruition, through teamwork and leveraging of library resources and local connections. The majority of the twenty youth currently enrolled in the Teen Volunteer Program interact with and contribute to the program, with fellow program members and other local teens, and with library collections and resources via numerous online platforms created specifically for this purpose. All online avenues of the program function as tools to promote the overall literacy, engagement, and inclusion of local youth. Currently, our program participants create content for each other (and for youth around the world) via Instagram, TikTok, Spotify, the Salt Spring Library Teen Blog, and Kahoot. All participants have access to a purpose-driven Canva account and the opportunity to learn the basics of creating promotional materials and marketing events they have planned themselves.</p> <p>In pitching a program or event to the program coordinator, and planning and facilitating events for their peers, they are afforded valuable experience in strategic planning, time management, event coordination, and professional correspondence, as well as the confidence earned in having completed a project with tangible positive benefits for their local community.</p>
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?</b>
<p>Community Engagement: Program participants completed multiple volunteer projects virtually, entirely from home in some cases, as a means of working within provincial health guidelines during the pandemic. These projects promoted engagement and inclusion for youth experiencing a sense of isolation due to quarantine. Evidence of this virtual youth engagement includes multiple Spotify podcasts hosted by a local youth that have continued to see double-digit weekly engagement through the pandemic. Our teen library Tik Tok account also has nearly 12,000 "likes" and over 42,000 video views, making our teen account more popular and widely-followed than the Vancouver Public Library!</p> <p>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: LGBTQIA+ youth engage in volunteer activities in-house and online, creating booklists, displays, Spotify playlists and Instagram posts to connect with other youth, for support, and to educate the community. Youth living with learning disabilities engage in adapted volunteer opportunities allowing them to gain valuable experience and skills within the program in an accessible manner. Our young adult BIPOC Collection circulates extensively.</p> <p>Climate Change: Our youth webinars with MLA Adam Olsen, focused on climate action, regularly engage 10-25 teens, and our average attendance at monthly teen volunteer meetings via zoom has more than doubled.</p>



<p><b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b></p>	
<p><b>5. Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>Local youth are accessing and engaging in our volunteer program, as well as our teen programming, digitally, in increasing numbers. Youth are regularly guided through the process of accessing digital collections from their mobile devices (Hoopla, Kanopy, and Libby).</p>
<p><b>6. Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>The new teen program coordinator is trained in mental health first aid and attends ongoing mental health summits, in order to facilitate increasingly positive interactions with local youth experiencing life challenges that may otherwise make in-house services of said youth difficult for staff. The coordinator is available to support youth and staff, alike, and conveys the take-home messages from ongoing Mental Wellness Summit Training.</p>
<p><b>7. Advancing Citizen Engagement</b></p>	
<p><b>8. Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	<p>The development of the new teen space and plan for engaging youth in the future of the library, and the future of library services for their demographic on Salt Spring Island factored into the October 2021 Strategic Planning process. Statistics about the teen program (numbers, events, and the needs of local youth) are conveyed to the board in monthly reports from the program, and strong support for the teen program reflects this.</p>
<p><b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b></p>	
<p>The major long-term outcome of the Teen Volunteer program was a significant increase in teen engagement with the library, and efforts made by local youth to create programs and opportunities to connect with one another and bounce back from the pandemic, within the library setting, and with library support. Greater youth engagement in climate action is evident in the readiness of local teens to be involved in climate action webinars, arriving for webinars with MLA Adam Olsen prepared with important questions, and eager to engage in dialogue with webinar hosts and other youth about the next steps forward in addressing the climate crisis.</p> <p>We are also seeing remarkable increases in teen usage of library spaces and resources, indicating our engagement with youth as long-term library users is on the rise.</p> <p>Short term, we are seeing a swift rise in youth using our teen space to create art, connect, dialogue, read, and have fun, and a rise in teen program attendance numbers, which has an immediate positive impact on our community where youth have been struggling with social disengagement and mental health (and resulting graffiti, substance use, and academic losses) through the pandemic.</p> <p>Library-hosted teen programs, i.e. the doctor led "mini med school" have been instrumental in familiarizing teen students with the library, making them feel it's their place, and its been instrumental in encouraging students to look beyond trades and local jobs, and consider university.</p>	
<p><b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?</b></p>	
<p>This program involves partnerships with Gulf Islands Secondary School, a local parent group, Transitions Salt Spring (David Denning), MLA Adam Olsen, The Neighbourhood Farm School, The Mental Wellness Initiative Summit Collaborative, and The Salt Spring Foundation.</p>	

<b>Project/Program Name</b>
Salt Spring Island Public Library Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>
<p>In the final year of its current strategic plan, it was determined by the Long Term Planning Committee of the Board of Trustees that a new strategic planning process was in order. This determination resulted from an analysis of the rapid changes in the community and in the world, along with additional pressures on the Salt Spring Library from the Covid-19 pandemic, increasing mental health challenges and economic inequalities, and a reduction in the number of volunteers.</p> <p>The Library undertook a broad community and stakeholder consultation process. It engaged Keli Butame, a Master's Student from the Library and Information Studies Program at UBC, and Darlene Gage, a strategic planning consultant from Salt Spring, to support the process. During the summer of 2021, surveys, interviews, and focus groups gathered feedback from the community at large, patrons, donors, staff, volunteers, and the Board of Trustees. This feedback formed the basis of the strategic planning process and fed into a two-day retreat that included seven members of the Board of Trustees and four staff members.</p> <p>The results of that retreat and the consultation feedback have resulted in an updated, timely and robust strategic plan that will guide the efforts of the staff and Trustees over the next six years and will increase Salt Spring's resilience as a community.</p>
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?</b>
<p>The Library's new Strategic Plan sets a path forward with updated Mission, Vision, and Values, and a new Motto and Guiding Principle. The strategic priorities (Community Engagement; Financial Growth; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion; Climate Change; and our Collections) will enable the Library to grow and evolve to support the community over the next 6 years.</p> <p><b>Mission:</b> We build opportunities for everyone to learn, connect and explore.</p> <p><b>Vision:</b> An engaged, inspired and connected Salt Spring.</p> <p><b>Values:</b> The Library values innovation, equity/diversity/inclusion and social justice, discovery, sustainability and is community-led.</p> <p><b>Motto:</b> Doorway to Possibilities</p> <p><b>Guiding Principle:</b> You Belong Here</p> <p><b>Strategic Priorities and Goals</b></p> <p><b>1. Community Engagement:</b> Grow the capacity of the library to be an active centre of the community by focusing on engagement with diverse audiences, and by communicating the importance, value, services, and welcome offered by the library.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise the profile of the library in the community to ensure public understanding of the library's services, importance and relevance, and the evolving place of libraries in communities.</li> <li>• Build stronger relationships with local schools &amp; families to create new library users.</li> <li>• Increase library usage by improving patron/user experiences.</li> </ul>



- Increase community connections to the library

**2. Financial Growth:** Build robust financial resource streams that will ensure the continued success of the library and enable a move towards a staff-driven, volunteer-supported service delivery model.

- Increase operational funding to ensure the library remains responsive to community needs and enable the shift to a staff-based operational model.
- Shift from a volunteer-based, staff-supported model to a staff-based, volunteer-supported model of service delivery to maintain high levels of service delivery.

**3. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion:** Commit to principles and activities that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, truth and reconciliation, and physical/social accessibility.

- Increase the accessibility of the building and resources
- Commit to diversity, equity, & inclusion, anti-racism & anti-oppression policies & operations.
- Focus on policies, operations, and programming that support the Calls to Action of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report.

**4. Climate Change:** Help prepare the community for the impacts of climate change by providing learning resources and programs, and also uphold the climate resilience of the library building.

- Play a role in preparing the community for the impacts of climate change
- Improve the physical space of the library to ensure it models sustainability and improves the comfort of users.

**5. Digital and Physical Collections:** Maintain and evolve the Library's digital and physical collection while looking for innovative ways to enable the community to explore, solidify skills, make connections, and find entertainment and knowledge.

- Enhance the digital library experience and help to bridge the digital divide among patrons to ensure equal access to resources.
- Maintain and improve the library's resource collections.

How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.

<p>9. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>The strategic priority, Digital and Physical Collections, includes a goal to enhance the digital library experience and help to bridge the digital divide among patrons to ensure equal access to resources, through these objectives: "Ensure broadband connectivity remains a priority, along with emerging technologies that promote a connected community," and "Build resources and supports to help people access and use digital services, with the creation of user guides, continuing tech cafes and tech tutor programs, and exploring the loaning of digital devices."</p>
<p>10. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>Through the strategic priority, "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Commit to principles and activities that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, truth and reconciliation, and physical/social accessibility," the Library staff and Trustees will undertake DEI training and professional development to build capacity.</p>

<b>11. Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Through the strategic priority, "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Commit to principles and activities that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, truth and reconciliation," the Library will: strengthen partnerships with Indigenous groups, develop programs that respond to the Calls to Action, continue learning and responding to emerging truths expressed by Indigenous communities across BC, continue to develop resources that are relevant to both Indigenous people and settlers to promote ongoing learning about the need for reconciliation, and increase visual inclusion through artwork.
<b>12. Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	The Library has enhanced governance by undergoing a broad and comprehensive strategic planning process that includes voices from the entire Salt Spring community, and completing a new strategic plan.
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b>	
While the completion of a new multi-year Strategic Plan is the primary outcome, a key outcome of completing a broad strategic planning process is the direct engagement with more than 700 members of the community, including Library partners, stakeholders, donors, staff, Board of Trustees, volunteers, non-users, and marginalized community members at the food bank and in the park.	
<b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?</b>	
In undertaking the Strategic planning process, the Library partnered with the UBC iSchool to enlist a professional experience student to undertake community consultation, the Community Services Society to engage food bank users, CRD PARC to engage park and Saturday market users, and other Library partners who attended our Focus Group session.	

### 3. KEY CHALLENGES

Please select the most significant challenges that the library has faced in the past year that you wish to comment on. Leave any other listed topics blank.

Challenge	Briefly describe how this challenge has impacted the library/community, and what steps the library took to address it in 2021. Please specify if any provincial funding was used, e.g., annual library funding, the technology grant, other non-PLB provincial grants (up to 250 words per topic).
COVID-19 (e.g., safety protocols, proof of vaccination)	The Covid-19 impacts on the Library and community were significant in 2021. Staff had to constantly pivot to run programs and adapt services under changing health measures and safety plans. Half of our staff got sick, and we needed to hire auxiliary staff to keep the doors open when Omicron hit. We supplied masks to the public, paid for by a \$4,000 Covid recovery grant which also paid for digital resources for patrons, and staffing for Teen and mental health liaison.



Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	The heat dome in the summer led to record temperatures and a need for a cooling centre on the island. The Library hopes to add a cooling function to its HVAC system in 2022 to be able to provide this service.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	The Library felt greater financial pressure due to the increased rate of inflation in 2021. We focused on our outreach and advertising and were able to offset some costs with increased community donations.
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	The Library is facing significantly declining volunteerism due to aging and the pandemic, and a correlated increased need for more paid staff. Two staff resigned over summer and we were able to replace them with experienced team members, also adding auxiliary staff to fill in. We had two events to appreciate library workers, a boat trip to an island picnic and a volunteer appreciation brunch.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	Disappearing affordable community housing led the Library to bring back work areas for patrons mid-pandemic and to plan for more areas in future. We also moved the Teen Area away from the busy public computers to balance the needs of our community members.
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	The BC Digital Initiatives funding allowed the Library to upgrade to better bandwidth and Wi-Fi access for our patrons for 2 years.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	An aging building led to an increased facility maintenance and staffing costs. There have been unprecedented costs for services and repairs, which led to an office renovation going over-budget due to delays. We combined adding a new staff office with glazing in the former teen area to create a Makerspace. Its opening was delayed due to Covid safety measures, but the Makerspace will launch this year.
Community access to the library	
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	In 2021, the Library funded a Hostile Interactions workshop for staff and volunteers, offered Safe Harbour diversity training and certified all staff in First Aid. The Library also designated a Librarian to be part of an ongoing Mental Wellness Summit to support our community members.

#### 4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Library Director Signature: Karen J. Henderson

Date: March 10, 2022

Board Chair Signature: Murphy

Date: March 10/22



APPENDIX: INDIGENOUS MURAL PHOTOS



Quw'utsun Artist Charlene Johnny

